

Message Title: **"You are the God who sees me"**

Message Text : **Genesis 16:1-16**

**16** Now Sarah, Abraham's wife, had borne him no children. But she had an Egyptian slave named Hagar;<sup>2</sup> so she said to Abraham, "The LORD has kept me from having children. Go, sleep with my slave; perhaps I can build a family through her." Abraham agreed to what Sarah said.<sup>3</sup> So after Abraham had been living in Canaan ten years, Sarah his wife took her Egyptian slave Hagar and gave her to her husband to be his wife.<sup>4</sup> He slept with Hagar, and she conceived.

When she knew she was pregnant, she began to despise her mistress.<sup>5</sup> Then Sarah said to Abraham, "You are responsible for the wrong I am suffering. I put my slave in your arms, and now that she knows she is pregnant, she despises me. May the LORD judge between you and me."

<sup>6</sup> "Your slave is in your hands," Abraham said. "Do with her whatever you think best." Then Sarah mistreated Hagar; so she fled from her.

<sup>7</sup> The angel of the LORD found Hagar near a spring in the desert; it was the spring that is beside the road to Shur.<sup>8</sup> And he said, "Hagar, slave of Sarah, where have you come from, and where are you going?"

"I'm running away from my mistress Sarah," she answered.

<sup>9</sup> Then the angel of the LORD told her, "Go back to your mistress and submit to her."<sup>10</sup> The angel added, "I will increase your descendants so much that they will be too numerous to count."

<sup>11</sup> The angel of the LORD also said to her:

"You are now pregnant  
and you will give birth to a son.  
You shall name him Ishmael,  
for the LORD has heard of your misery.

<sup>12</sup> He will be a wild donkey of a man;  
his hand will be against everyone  
and everyone's hand against him,  
and he will live in hostility  
toward all his brothers."

<sup>13</sup> She gave this name to the LORD who spoke to her: "You are the God who sees me," for she said, "I have now seen<sup>□</sup> the One who sees me."<sup>14</sup> That is why the well was called Beer Lahai Roi; it is still there, between Kadesh and Bered.

<sup>15</sup> So Hagar bore Abraham a son, and Abraham gave the name Ishmael to the son she had borne.<sup>16</sup> Abraham was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore him Ishmael.

## **Introduction**

God has called Abraham to come out of his father's household and promised to make him into a great nation & to bless his descendants. Abraham obeyed God & started his journey to the unknown land. He took his wife Sarah, his nephew Lot, and all the possessions they had accumulated and the people they had acquired in Haran. When we read Genesis 15, despite of God giving everything to Abraham – land, wealth & possessions, he was still not happy as he remains childless. However, God promised to bless Abraham & Sarah with a son.

Hagar on the other hand is one of the Egyptian slaves presented to Abraham by Pharaoh. She followed Abraham and Sarah wherever they went as they were her masters.

**Genesis 12:14-16,** *"<sup>14</sup> When Abraham came to Egypt, the Egyptians saw that Sarah was a very beautiful woman. <sup>15</sup> And when Pharaoh's officials saw her, they praised her to Pharaoh, and she was taken into his palace. <sup>16</sup> He treated Abraham well for her sake, and Abraham acquired sheep and cattle, male and female donkeys, male and female servants, and camels.*

## **Wrong Choice**

*Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. But she had an Egyptian slave named Hagar; <sup>2</sup> so she said to Abram, "The LORD has kept me from having children. Go, sleep with my slave; perhaps I can build a family through her."*

*Abram agreed to what Sarai said. <sup>3</sup> So after Abram had been living in Canaan ten years, Sarai his wife took her Egyptian slave Hagar and gave her to her husband to be his wife. <sup>4</sup> He slept with Hagar, and she conceived. **Genesis 16: 1-4***

### Points for reflection:

- Sarah has been waiting for the fulfilment of God's promise all these years. But 10 years have passed by and she blamed God for her barrenness (*verse 2 "so she said to Abram, "The LORD has kept me from having children"*). She refused to wait further and decided to give Hagar to Abraham and thought through her she can build her own family.
- Abraham on the other hand have a close communion with God. God had appeared in vision, counselled him, provided, and protected him and Sarah all this while. God has kept His promise in the past and Abraham knows God is faithful in keeping His word.
- Instead of acknowledging the faithfulness of God & waiting for His time to fulfill the promise, Abraham agreed with Sarah and went along with the decision.
- Sarah took decision based on the custom of that time and got Hagar conceived.
- Hagar has no say in this whole situation. She was a slave and had to follow the orders given by her master.
- In all the wrong decision making, pressures from traditions and society & expectation from others, Hagar was pushed into a difficult situation.
- This was not what she wanted, and the decision was not made by her. In all of these, she was the most affected person. She was the victim of the wrong choice made by Abraham and Sarah.
- All of us have faced situations where we become victims of someone's wrong decision, especially decisions from people in power and authority. Perhaps we know

someone who has suffered and gone through terrible things due to bad choices made by loved ones.

- Can someone's bad decision leave our life in a hopeless and terrible situation without any hope?

## **Hagar Mistreated**

*<sup>4</sup> He slept with Hagar, and she conceived.*

*When she knew she was pregnant, she began to despise her mistress. <sup>5</sup> Then Sarai said to Abram, "You are responsible for the wrong I am suffering. I put my slave in your arms, and now that she knows she is pregnant, she despises me. May the LORD judge between you and me."*

*<sup>6</sup> "Your slave is in your hands," Abram said. "Do with her whatever you think best." Then Sarai mistreated Hagar; so she fled from her. **Genesis 16: 4-6***

### Points for reflection:

- These whole idea of building a family through Hagar came from Sarah. She initiated the move because she blamed God for her barrenness.
- Sarah was of course jealous, angry, and frustrated with the whole situation. She now blames Abraham for the whole situation.
- Abraham on the other hand was very passive when approaching this situation.
- Hagar is not his wife but it is still his responsibility to provide & protect her, However, he neglected his responsibility and even told Sarah to treat Hagar as she wishes.
- To say "*Your slave is in your hands*" & "*Do with her whatever you think best*" is to completely surrender & let go Hagar under the raging hands of Sarah.
- Sarah took all her anger, frustration and disappointments on Hagar and began mistreating her. The mistreatment was so bad that Hagar had to flee from her master.
- Hagar could have been so broken and would have felt so empty inside. She didn't ask to be in this situation but rather she was pushed to this. She was then blamed, accused, and mistreated.
- People who should have been responsible have neglected their responsibility. Instead of caring for her, the ones who should have looked after her have used their power to treat her unjustly. She doesn't deserve this treatment.
- When facing similar situations, we tend to ask why is God silent and has He forsaken us?

## **Encountering God**

*<sup>7</sup> The angel of the LORD found Hagar near a spring in the desert; it was the spring that is beside the road to Shur. <sup>8</sup> And he said, "Hagar, slave of Sarai, where have you come from, and where are you going?"*

*"I'm running away from my mistress Sarai," she answered.*

*<sup>9</sup> Then the angel of the LORD told her, "Go back to your mistress and submit to her." <sup>10</sup> The angel added, "I will increase your descendants so much that they will be too numerous to count."*

*<sup>11</sup> The angel of the LORD also said to her:*

"You are now pregnant  
 and you will give birth to a son.  
 You shall name him Ishmael,<sup>[a]</sup>  
 for the LORD has heard of your misery.  
<sup>12</sup> He will be a wild donkey of a man;  
 his hand will be against everyone  
 and everyone's hand against him,  
 and he will live in hostility  
 toward<sup>[b]</sup> all his brothers." **Genesis 16: 7-12**

### **God sought her first:**

- Having lost all hope & unable to bear Sarah's mistreatment, Hagar was left with no choice but to run away. Then an angel of the Lord found Hagar near a spring in the desert.
- The one whom she met in the desert was originally referred to as the angel of the Lord :
  - Verse 7, <sup>7</sup> **The angel** of the LORD found Hagar near a spring in the desert;
  - Verse 9, <sup>9</sup> Then **the angel** of the LORD told her
  - Verse 11, <sup>11</sup> **The angel** of the LORD also said to her:
- Hagar recognized that she had actually seen and encountered God in the desert and referred to him as Lord, in verse 13, "<sup>13</sup> She gave this name **to the LORD** who spoke to her:" It was God who sought and encountered her in the desert.
- Despite of no one caring or looking after her, **God sought and spoke to Hagar:**  
 Verse 7, "<sup>7</sup> The angel of the LORD **found** Hagar"  
 Verse 8, "<sup>8</sup> And **he said**, "Hagar, slave of Sarai, where have you come from, and where are you going?  
 No one took notice of her situation and nobody cared for Hagar. No one even comforted her in her difficult situation. But God came after her. God sought her first.  
**1 John 4:19** says, "<sup>19</sup> We love because he first loved us".  
 None of us looked for God but He made the first move. He first loved us and approached us despite of the circumstances or mess we are in.

### **God heard her cry and saw her misery:**

- When she cried, God heard her cry and saw her misery. Verse 11 says, "*You shall name him Ishmael, for the LORD has heard of your misery.*"
- Many things would have influenced and have gone against Hagar, e.g – the wrong and unplanned decision made by Abraham & Sarah, the custom / traditions of those days, expectation of the society & the unjust treatment on her. But God walked through all of it, found Hagar, saw her misery, and heard her cry.
- Nothing was hidden from God. Her situation is not beyond God's reach.  
**Isaiah 59:1** says, "*Surely the arm of the LORD is not too short to save, nor his ear too dull to hear.*"
- None of us are beyond God's grace and mercy.
- God is always near us, ever present to listen when we call and answer us in times of trouble.

- Despite the child came through a bad decision, and no responsibility taken by Abraham, God still has plans for the child.

**Verse 10 -12,**

" <sup>10</sup> The angel added, "I will increase your descendants so much that they will be too numerous to count."<sup>11</sup> The angel of the LORD also said to her:

"You are now pregnant  
and you will give birth to a son.  
You shall name him Ishmael,  
for the LORD has heard of your misery.

<sup>12</sup> He will be a wild donkey of a man;  
his hand will be against everyone  
and everyone's hand against him,  
and he will live in hostility  
toward all his brothers."

- Abraham & Sarah would have failed her, but God will not fail her. Abraham neglected his responsibility, but God didn't.

**God didn't show favouritism:**

- We know God has called Abraham and has made covenant with him. The Israelites are God's holy and covenant people. But that does not mean God's goodness, mercy and favour is exclusive for the Israelites alone.
- God of Israel chose to appear to an Egyptian slave woman, who is despised and considered worthless by people around her.
- He encountered her, heard her plight, and comforted her.
- In **Romans 2:11**, it says,  
" <sup>11</sup> For God does not show favouritism."
- Hagar now has the same access to God just like Abraham. God didn't show His mercy to Abraham alone but extended it to Hagar and blessed her too.
- There is not favouritism or partiality in Him.

**Hagar Found God**

<sup>13</sup> She gave this name to the LORD who spoke to her: "You are the God who sees me," for she said, "I have now seen<sup>[c]</sup> the One who sees me." **Genesis 16:13**

**Points for reflection:**

- Hagar could have been a victim of bad unplanned decisions, injustice, or people's failure but she was never out of God's sovereign plans for her life.
- On one side she was hard pressed by the current difficult situation which she has no control over it. But on the other side, she saw the reality of God's control over her life & how He came to her aid.
- She encountered God in such a special & personal way and declared "**You are the God who sees me**". Hagar knows that God loves her and will see her through her difficult situation.

- Despite of all the terrible things she had to go through, the encounter she had with God brought confidence and strength in her, which allowed her to face her problematic situation instead of running away.
- When facing testing period and seasons, we feel weak, broken, and empty inside. We need to encounter God who will give us the confidence from within to face our situations.

## **Conclusion**

- Today many things could have gone against us.
- Terrible things could have taken place in our lives due to – wrong decisions, injustice / unfairness, and people in authority and etc.
- We could feel we are just victims and there is no way we can come out of the situation we are in.
- The God whom we worship is a Sovereign God who is in control of our lives despite the circumstances we are in. He sees our misery, listens to our cry, and will see us through.
- God not only sees the current misery we are facing but He also saw the spiritual lostness we were in.
- Because of our sins, we are separated from God and will be lost forever in eternal condemnation.
- Yet, God, because He loves us so much, sent His only son Jesus to die for our sins.
- **John 3:14** says, <sup>14</sup>*Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up,* <sup>15</sup>*that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him."*

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## **PRAYER ITEMS**

1. Be aware & mindful that God is sovereign and in control of our lives
2. Bring out our pain, regrets, past hurts & submit them to God
3. Trust and believe that God cares and will see us through from all challenges

### **Church**

1. To be steadfast in our pursuit of God's call over our lives
2. Intimate desires to be in His presence in prayer & worship
3. Ministries: Life Explorers, Redeeming Roses, Destiny Kids & Teens, Sunday School, Lifeline Youth, Worship Team & Church Leadership
4. Families / Individuals in Life Church: Strength and direction for those facing challenging situation
5. God would open doors for the church to reach out to the nearby communities

### **Covid 19**

1. Healing & recovery for those who are infected
2. Frontlines
3. Vaccines – Vaccination plans to be effective & pray the vaccines does not have any side effects on people's health
4. Recovery of economy & unemployment
5. God's protection upon everyone as more sectors, schools and places of worship are open now

### **Physical Healing & Salvation**

Si Yun (radiotherapy) & Jayden (asthma)

### **Nation**

1. Leadership & good governance – political situation in Malaysia
2. Racial reconciliation
3. Churches in Malaysia to grow spiritually